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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KCOR](#) [KISL](#) [PINS](#) [IZ](#) [IR](#)  
SUBJECT: SULAY GOVERNOR: IRAN'S INFLUENCE INCREASING

CLASSIFIED BY: DEAN, Acting Regional Coordinator, REO Kirkuk, US  
Department of State.  
REASON: 1.4 (b), (d)

11. (C) Sulaymaniyah Provincial Governor Dana Ahmed Majid complained on 13 March to RC(A) and IPAQ about Iran's growing influence on Iraq's energy, oil refineries, and imports and exports. Majid said Iran was heavily invested in a new railway route from Basrah to China, which would cross Iranian territory.

Further, the Iraqi national government recently approved an agreement allowing Iran to refine oil from Basrah. Finally, Iran provided electricity to Iraq. Majid concluded that Iran's control over Iraq's energy, oil refineries, and import and exports challenged Iraq's sovereignty.

12. (C) Majid said that, because Kurds were Sunnis and Iran had problems with its own Kurds, Iran was not influential in the Kurdish region. However, he warned that corruption in Iraq and the KRG increased the power of the Islamic parties. Majid gave the example of Iranian President Ahmadinejad who was elected on an anti-corruption platform despite his lack of political or religious credentials. Majid warned that events on the borders directly affected Kurdistan: "We are the neighbors of Iran - only 400 meters stand between us." He said Islamic parties in Kurdistan received budgets from neighboring countries.

13. (C) Majid said that during the two years he served as Chief of the Security Forces (Asayish) in the region, he was accused of violating the rights of the Islamic parties by prohibiting them from meeting to give religious instruction to children. Majid said, "I broke the law in the interest of the region. It was the right thing to do, to keep the children and young people out of their houses, learning their ideology." Majid said preventing children from learning the Islamic ideology was especially important considering the administrative, financial, and political corruption in the Kurdish Region.

14. (C) Majid recounted that he had been a Marxist as a young man in the Peshmerga, but that even then he had prayed when in danger: when conditions were bad, people would turn to religion. He requested U.S. assistance in creating a plan to control the spread of political Islam in Iraq and the Kurdish region. He said the KRG needed help fighting corruption and taking a census of the economic issues in the Kurdish region.

15. (C) COMMENT: Concern about fundamentalism is a consistent theme from the PUK and officials recognize official corruption is helping their Islamic political opponents. We have yet to see, though, whether Kurdish leaders seriously intend to tackle the endemic corruption that is causing it. Majid offered no proof for his contentions regarding Iran and he may have been deliberately overstating to make a point. His confession about violating freedom of association to protect democracy may be a

prediction as much as a reminiscence.

DEAN